

Does the Moon Have It's Own Source of Light?

by

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Argument:

We read in Saheeh Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 54, Hadith 422:

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "The sun and the moon will be folded up (deprived of their light) on the Day of Resurrection."

The hadeeth ascribes light to the moon, but we know that the moon doesn't have it's own light. Rather, the moon only reflects the light of the Sun. Isn't this a scientific error which cannot be attributed to the Prophet?

Response:

Nowhere does the hadeeth say that the moon has its own source of light. What is mentioned in brackets, "deprived of their light," is from the translator. The hadeeth only says that the sun and moon will be folded up (*mukawwaraan*).

We read in Surah 81:1:

"When the sun is wrapped up"

The same root word is used here (*kuwweerat*), and the word itself means: to be wrapped or folded up. The extinguishing of the light of the Sun is merely an implication of this act and not a part of the definition of the word itself,¹ for the word itself only means to be folded or wrapped up.² The main implication behind the Sun and Moon being folded up is that they will be

¹ Ibn Kathir said:

فمعنى قوله تعالى "كورت" جمع بعضها إلى بعض ثم لفت فرمي بها وإذا فعل بها ذلك ذهب ضوءها

² Mulla Ali Qari in his commentary on *Mishkat al-Masabeeh* said:

والتكوير معناه اللف ومنه تكوير العمامة

Al-Waahidi in his commentary *al-Waseet* said:

وأصل التكوير : لف الشيء على جهة الاستدارة ، تقول : كورت العمامة ، إذا لفتتها.

displaced from their current locations.³

To say that the moon losing its light is an implication and result of it being wrapped up is a claim made by scholars⁴ and not a claim made in the hadeeth. Nevertheless, this claim does not necessarily contradict science since the claim itself is not clearly saying that the source of moonlight is the moon itself. In everyday conversations, we refer to "moonlight," yet we never intend to mean that the source of moonlight is the moon itself. So claiming that the moon would darken after it has been wrapped up would be correct if one intends that the moon would not be reflecting off light anymore and would only appear dark.

In conclusion, there is no scientific error in this hadeeth.

³ Mulla Ali Qari in his commentary on *Mishkat al-Masabeeh* said:

اللف والجمع أي يلف صورهما لنا فيذهب انبساطهما في الأفاق

⁴ An example would be Badr ad-Deen al-'Aini who in his commentary on Saheeh Bukhari said:

مكوران أي مطويان ذاهبا الضوء